COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

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"That the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) possesses great talents, no man is more ready to "acknowledge than I am: his eloquence, his dexterity at debate, may be unrivalled; but, his talents are "rather showy than solid, and better calculated to defend bad, than to produce good, measures."——Mr. GREY's Speech, 7th May, 1802.

REFORM OF FINANCIAL ABUSES.

LETTER V.

SIR,——In my last letter (p. 769) I endeavoured to explain the necessity of rendering distinct the duties of incurring public expenses, of examining the accounts of them when incurred, and of paying for them according to the reports of those entrusted with the examination. This last duty is one of very great importance, for however simple and easy it may appear to make a payment, when the amount to be paid is ascertained, and the money is ready to pay it; it is in the transacting of this portion of the public business, that the greatest abuses take place. These consist in the practice of paymasters holding large balances in their hands; the embezzlement by them frequently of the public money without detection; and the withholding of payment to those who are justly entitled to their money. As a first step towards preventing the continuance of these abuses, it has already been recommended to form a part of the Board of Treasury into a board for the sole purpose of controlling the public expenditure, and performing the duty of all existing paymasters general. But even if so much was done, it would still be necessary to do a great deal more to produce a reform in detail throughout the paymasters' department. To point out what this is will form the subject of the remainder of this letter. If ALL the revenue was made payable into the Bank of England, the first obvious principle on which the expenditure of it should be regulated, is the direct payment of money by the Bank to the creditor *himself* entitled to receive it. If this principle could always be acted upon, an order of the Treasury on the Bank in favour of the creditor would be sufficient without further trouble, and the money passing directly from the place of custody to the pocket of the creditor, no possible misuse of it could occur. It may, therefore, be laid down as a good regulation, that so much of the public expenditure as can be conducted in this manner, should be so conducted. The portion of it that would come under this regulation, would clearly be that which could with convenience to the parties be paid in London. If the different boards for supplying the army and navy, were obliged to agree for payment of what they might purchase at the Bank, the portion of the public money which would remain to be paid elsewhere than in London, would not be of a very considerable amount. It would be composed of few more than the following items. 1. Salaries and incidents in the departments for collecting the revenue, and other local or temporary expenses. 2. Wages to soldiers, sailors, and labourers. 3. Expenses in foreign settlements. To make the payments under the first head, an arrangement might be made between the Treasury and the Bank, by which the Bank would undertake to employ certain clerks for the purpose of remitting to the country the requisite sums. Paymasters of districts should be appointed to receive these sums, and apply them under the control of the Treasury. It is obvious, that as no money can be issued, according to the plan proposed, by the Treasury, except upon the report of an examining board, which board in this instance, would be that for miscellaneous services, there could never be any plea for impresting money to these paymasters, or any excuse for keeping a balance in hand. They would have no other duty to perform, than to receive and pay certain sums of money according to positive and precise orders. No principle can be more founded in sound sense and sound policy, with respect to the public expenditure, than this which ordains the previous examination by a responsible board, of EVERY claim for payment before any payment is made. This is a principle that should never be departed from in any instance whatsoever. And though many may plead the inconvenience of it, and will be able to plead also, that that inconvenience arises from legislative regulations that cannot be avoided, it should not avail against this principle, but the laws should be made to conform to it, and such further regulations made as will give it full effect. There no doubt are cases in which it would be highly inconvenient to oblige every one who has a legal demand against the state, to come to London to prove the justness of it. In the case of drawbacks of

duties, this inconvenience would exist. But why should not the system of drawbacks be abolished? Would it not be wiser to admit all goods to be warehoused that are intended to be exported, than to make two legislative provocations to defraud the public; first by the necessity of receiving, and secondly, by that of repaying the duty? So also in all similar cases, regulations might be made for preventing inconvenience. With regard to salaries and incidents on the establishments for collecting the revenue, the Board of Miscellaneous Services, might order them to be paid upon quarterly certificates of the amount due to be returned to them by each Revenue Board. But, to return to our immediate subject.——2. The wages of soldiers, sailors, and labourers, must continue to be paid by agents; and in this and, 3. In the case of expenses for foreign settlements, the mischievous system of impresting money, must unavoidably be continued. As however, each officer who would receive money on account, would be directly accountable to the Treasury, it would be fully within their power to take care that no part of the money so imprested was misapplied, or too large balances kept in hand. The present system of leaving the duties of deputy paymasters abroad, to their deputies, is one that should be instantly suppressed. Two only, as it appears in the 19th Report of the Committee of Finance, of the whole number of foreign paymasters acted themselves in the year 1797. Whilst such practices are sanctioned, how can it be expected that any justice can be done the public in the distribution of its money?——Let the practice of managing the public expenditure be formed upon sound and established principles, and let the legislative regulations for all payments, be made to conform to this practice. The public will then have the satisfaction of feeling and knowing, that what they pay, and in so doing suffer great privations, is fairly applied to their advantage. The business of public offices will no longer be mysterious and incomprehensible, and be thus screened from investigation as it now is. The code of regulations that now governs it, will then appear in the full deformity of their inconsistency, of their impolicy, of their inefficiency, and of their qualifications to cover rather than to expose frauds and criminality.——I have now, Mr. Cobbett, given you a sketch of a system, at least possessing, if it possess no other merit, that of being consistent with some clear principles of finance. I have not been able to enter as fully as I could wish into detail, in order to support it in all its parts. Such an attempt would have been more becoming a regular work, than the contracted dimensions of a few letters. I trust the consideration of this most important subject, will attract the attention of parliament, and that some steps will be adopted for effecting a radical reformation in the management of our finances.—I am, Sir, &c.——VERAX.——*May* 23, 1805.

IRISH COMMISSIONERS.

SIR,——I feel anxious, through the medium of your valuable Register, to call the attention of the friends of economy, to a subject, which, I think well worthy of their attention.——Soon after the unfortunate rebellion in Ireland, a Board of Commissioners was appointed by the Irish parliament for the relief of those loyalists who had suffered in the rebellion; they were empowered to investigate the claims of the persons injured, and to award such compensation as they conceived equitable. The Irish parliament, at the same time, voted a certain sum, to be appropriated to the purpose abovementioned. The expense to which the nation was put by the establishment of this Board of Commissioners, was as follows:

Eight Commissioners at £400 each	£3,200	0	0
1 Secretary	200	0	0
1 Clerk	118	6	0
1 Do.	88	14	6
1 Do.	59	3	0
Annual charge	£3,666	3	6

I have only to remark that the sum granted by parliament has long since been expended, and that were a just claim to be made to-morrow, it could not be received, as under the act, the commissioners are empowered to consider such claims *alone* as are tendered before a certain day therein specified. This day is long since past, yet still the nation continues saddled with the salaries, &c. of these commissioners, without a possibility of its deriving any advantage from their existence. The amount of the charge is, to be sure, inconsiderable, and after the thousands and tens of thousands *lately* lost to the nation, it may appear trifling, however in my humble opinion, it might be expended in a manner rather more advantageous to the public than the one at present pursued.——When the subject comes to be investigated, I am satisfied that the statement I have made will be found strictly correct.——A. D.——14*th May*, 1805.

TRANSPORT AND OTHER BOARDS.

SIR,——The new bills grant no power for an inquiry into the office of Paymaster of the Marines; and of Navy Widows' Pensions; nor the department of Marine Cloathing, in which, if report speaks truth, there has, in the mode of contracting, been something worthy of examination.——The colonial agents, who are great accountants, have been overlooked. It might have happened, that these gentlemen have had balances, when supplies have not abounded, and when the civil officers have been suffering much for want of pay in our distant possessions. And, why not embrace the balances of receivers general, of duties upon uninhabited houses, and other sources of public income? Last and not least, the branch of the Transport Office *under the Treasury*. As the Commissioners of Naval Inquiry have only investigated such of the proceedings of the Transport Commissioners, as come within their relation with the Admiralty Board, simply the business of prisoners of war. But the great expenditure of the Transport Board, has been the performance of *miscellaneous services for the Treasury and Secretary of State*; doing all those things the clerks of the Treasury used to do; *buying arms*; hiring all the transports, and furnishing most of the articles for foreign expeditions.——I am, &c. &c.——R. C.——*23d May*, 1805.

FOREIGN OFFICIAL PAPERS.

ST. DOMINGO.——*Proclamation of Brigadier General Ferrand, Commander in Chief in the Island of St. Domingo (or Hispaniola); dated at the City of St. Domingo, 5th Feb.* 1805.

Convinced by long experience that all kind of regard and moderation is useless towards the scoundrels who maintain the rebellion in Hispaniola, by furnishing supplies to the rebels, &c.——Art. 1. All individuals whomsoever found on board any vessel or vessels, allies or neutrals, bound to any ports in Hispaniola occupied by the rebels, shall suffer death. Those found on board any vessel, allies or neutrals, coming out of any ports in Hispaniola, occupied by the rebels, shall suffer death. Those found at two leagues from any port on the Coast of Hispaniola, occupied by the rebels, on board of allies or neutrals, shall suffer death.——2. All prisoners made in these different cases, shall be brought into one of the ports of Hispaniola, occupied by the French, to be tried by a military commission, which is to pronounce sentence.——3. This proclamation shall be put into execution on the 1st Floreal, (21st April).

WAR IN WEST INDIES.——*Letter from General Ernouf to his Majesty the Emperor, dated Quarter-General, from the Camp of Boulogne, near Basseterre, Gaudaloupe, March* 12, 1805.

SIRE,——By order of your Majesty, and in spite of the numerous fleets of the enemy, a fleet has made its appearance at the Windward Islands. Its presence has increased our force, and we feel the most lively joy at the sight of the formidable succours. Every where, in these seas, is the flag of the English humbled; all their men of war hide themselves; their trade is annihilated, and their merchantmen have sought security and protection in neutral ports, since they did not conceive themselves safe behind fortifications which surrendered as soon as they were attacked.——This expedition, as useful as unexpected, has fixed for the colonies the period of your glorious accession to the empire, and the true interest which your Majesty has in all your people, whatever part of the empire they inhabit. What have we not to expect from the future?——Your Majesty will deign to accept kindly the tribute of love, admiration, and gratitude, which I offer you in name of the first authorities, the inhabitants, the merchants, and the military of Guadaloupe.——I have the honour, Sire, with the deepest reverence, to subscribe myself, &c.

WAR IN WEST INDIES.——*An Account of the Proceedings of the French Fleet in the West Indies; published at Paris, 19th May*, 1805.

Admiral Missiessy arrived at Martinique on the 20th February. Near St. Lucia he gave chase to a convoy, escorted by two frigates, but as the pursuit drew him to the leeward of Martinique, he relinquished it. He remained for twenty-four hours at Martinique, in which time he landed a great quantity of musquets and ammunition of every kind. From thence he made sail for Dominica, and arrived on the 22d at Roseau, at five in the morning. The battery of Cacha Cron, before which the Majestueux passed at four o'clock, fired two alarm guns, which were not heard from the town; the squadron hoisted English colours. General Prevost took it for the squadron of Commodore Johnston, which he expected, and immediately sent the port captain to bring the Majestueux to anchor. The captain did not perceive his mistake until he was on board. At eleven o'clock the troops landed; the defence was very determined. At four the militia laid down their arms, the town was taken, and the citadel capitulated. All the ships in the harbour, as well as the enemy's

magazines, fell into our power. All the troops became prisoners of war, except about 400, who, with General Prevost, took refuge at Fort Cabrita, about twelve leagues from the town of Roseau.——General Lagrange was aware that there was no ship of war or merchant vessel in Rupert's Bay, and that Fort Cabrita was only an isolated rock at the point of a promontory: he did not deem it adviseable to attack it. After having taken away every thing that was valuable at Dominica, and sent the prisoners to Guadaloupe, he reimbarked on the 27th, and made for Guadaloupe, where he anchored at Basseterre. He landed there the ammunition, the cloathing, and the other articles which were intended for that island.——On the 5th of March the squadron took possession of Nevis, and after having raised a considerable contribution, captured the ships in the harbour, and taken the garrison prisoners, it sailed for St. Kitts. The fort which protected the town made some shew of resistance, but the troops having landed with little difficulty, the fort surrendered at the second shot. At four o'clock 600 men were in possession of the forts. The light squadron entered the road; all the vessels in it were carried off, and the island laid under contribution. On the next evening the troops reimbarked, and the colony was evacuated.——The squadron sailed for Montserrat; on the morning of the 9th the island was in our possession, the English garrison prisoners, and a heavy contribution imposed upon the inhabitants. The ships were all brought off as in the other islands.——The 10th, 11th, and 12th were employed in making a number of prizes, which the squadron sent to Guadaloupe.——On the 14th the squadron returned to Martinique, and sailed again on the 16th, but for what destination is uncertain.——The following is an account of the prizes sent to Martinique, and sold there, by order of Admiral Missiessy:—The ship Glory, which sold for about 40,000*l.*; the Apollo, the Stapleton, and the Marquis of Lansdowne, brought about 20,000*l.*; the Hawkesbury, the Mars, and William, 20,000*l.*; and the Peggy, Nelly, Jane, Richmond, St. Urania, and Progress, about 20,000*l.*——Many other vessels had been sent in, but not sold; a greater number had been sent to Guadaloupe.——Guadaloupe and Martinique were in the best possible state of defence. They were plentifully supplied with ammunition, and had about 8000 troops of the line, and as many militia; a considerable corps remained on board the squadron. Our loss in all these expeditions did not amount to more than eighty killed and wounded. We met with no material resistance except at Dominica; but the enemy suffered so much, that we think they will not be very forward again to contend with our troops. General Prevost shewed but little talent: with the means he possessed, he might have made a more determined resistance. Instead of which, he shut himself up in Fort Cabrita, where General Lagrange could have taken him in four days, if he pleased.

DOMESTIC OFFICIAL PAPERS.

PETITIONS AGAINST LORD MELVILLE.——*The following petition of Bedfordshire was presented to the House of Commons, on the 23d of May*, 1805.

A petition of several freeholders of the County of Bedford, was presented to the House, and read; setting forth, that the petitioners unite with their constituents at large in thanking the House for their resolutions of the 8th and 10th of April, founded on the Tenth Report of the Commissioners of Naval Inquiry: by the first of those resolutions the House vindicated the character of their country, by censuring a minister proved to have been guilty of a gross violation of law, and a flagrant breach of duty; by the second, the House laid before the Sovereign the sense of his people, and enabled him, by a ready compliance with their wishes, to endear himself more than ever to their loyal and affectionate hearts; and the petitioners implore the House, steadily to persevere in detecting all other abuses which are pointed at, as well in the Tenth as in the Eleventh Report of the said Commissioners, attentively to investigate all irregularities which may be brought to light by any of their succeeding reports, impartially, minutely, and resolutely to examine into the public expenditure in all the other branches of administration, and to inflict exemplary punishment on all who shall be found guilty of, or in any wise aiding, abetting, or conniving at similar frauds and depredations; and that the petitioners are thoroughly persuaded that it is needless for them to urge any fresh motive to the House in order to induce them to adopt such measures; they rely upon the knowledge the House have of their duties, and upon their sympathy and fellow feeling with their constituents, who, during a long, a difficult, and trying period of war, in times of severe hardships and scarcity, have chearfully submitted to the heaviest burthens; that what they granted liberally should be applied honestly was the least the petitioners could hope from men whose conscientious and bounden duty enjoined a faith-

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ful discharge of the great trust reposed in them. Disappointed of this hope, and finding on the contrary that a minister filling many great and lucrative offices, high in the confidence of his Sovereign, one of the foremost in his pretended efforts to reform abuses, has been at length himself detected in conniving for a series of years at the foulest peculation: the petitioners now approach the House with their claims to protection and justice; and they trust, therefore, that in prosecuting the inquiries necessary for these ends, the House will proceed in that spirit of firmness and integrity which dictated the resolutions of the 8th and 10th of April; and that they will not trust this great cause out of their own hands, nor again suffer themselves to be deceived by the plausible promises of men who openly violate the laws of the legislature, and hold in defiance and contempt the wholesome guards they enact against the possible malversations of office; and that the petitioners also trust that the example of the past will act upon the House as a warning for the future; that they will see and acknowledge the just value of those principles on which our ancestors established the power and authority of the House of Commons; that the House will feel their office to be that of control over the servants of the Crown; and that jealousy and vigilance instead of confidence and compliance, are their true and distinguishing characteristics; to this system the petitioners humbly hope that the House will direct their immediate and unvarying attention, as the system by which the country may best be defended, and as the only one under which the constitution can be safe.

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

STIPENDIARY CURATES.——In the preceding sheet, p. 788, *et seq.* some grammatical errors were made, in an article upon this subject. A few lines from the beginning there occur an instance or two of tautology, and in p. 791, the word "*you*" is inserted by mistake after the words, "*I allude to.*" But, what I am most desirous of correcting is, a part of my statement which a correspondent has noticed as containing an historical inaccuracy. I allude to the description, which, in p. 789, is given of *the origin of church property.* As a description of the origin of the *whole* of the property of the church, it certainly is inaccurate, or, at least, defective; but, the reader must have perceived, that my wish was, for perspicuity as well as for brevity's sake, to avoid a complicated picture, and yet to select such a single object as should afford a fair and firm foundation for the argument which I was endeavouring to construct.——Since the aforementioned article was written, a passage in Sir William Scott's speech of the 7th of April, 1802, has occurred to me. The whole of the speech (it was upon the non-residence bill) will be found in the Register, Vol. I. p. 1062; and, the passage I particularly allude to, describing *advowsons* as *private property*, will be found in p. 1076. He tells us, that advowsons were "originally, *perhaps*, mere "trusts;" but, that they "are now become "lay fees. They are bought and sold, and "are lay property, just as much as any "other tenements or hereditaments." That this is the truth there can be no doubt; and, I think, there can be as little doubt of its being a truth greatly to be deplored. For, with submission to Sir William Scott, I presume, that, in describing advowsons as being originally mere trusts, the word "*perhaps*" might have been omitted, without any risk either to the argument or to historical truth; and, that the buying or selling of presentations to church livings is a shameful abuse, and tends directly to the degredation and ruin of the church, will, I think, be denied by nobody. There may be *law* for it; but, it is of comparatively modern invention; and, as the rights of the church stand upon an ancient foundation; as that foundation is an excellent one, I am always sorry to see any attempt made to prop them up by modern contrivances, and, especially, when those contrivances have evidently been suggested by the very excess of abuse. When the right of presentation to a living is openly bought and sold, there is little wonder that the living itself is regarded as *private property*; and, there is no very great wonder, that common men should not clearly perceive the justice of their being obliged to give to the clergyman the tenth part of the produce of their land; seeing that it is hardly possible for them to conceive a reason for property really *private* being held in such a way. I am convinced, that it is to the prevalence of this notion of the advowsons and livings being private property, and being by the holders considered as such, that the church owes great part of that grudging and ill-will which we find to exist with respect to its claims and its clergy. Do away this notion; tell the people, and let them see by your manner of bestowing benefices and of performing the duties attached to them, that you regard the livings as things held in trust for the convenience, consolation, and salvation of the people; let the people see this; let it be visible to them in the conduct of the patron and the incumbent, and I am

much deceived if you will not, even in a short space of time, perceive a returning attachment to the Church, at least, amongst the common people, and particularly people of no possessions in house or land, such as we may properly enough call the poor; all of whom would then perceive the church establishment to be neither more nor less than a means of securing the consolations of religious service *to them*, who, otherwise, would, from their poverty, be excluded therefrom. They would perceive that they had some interest in the tithes, and it would be difficult for the farmers to persuade them, as they now do, that to rob the parson is doing God service. But, if the patron, by his manner of bestowing the living, and the incumbent by his manner of performing, or, rather, neglecting his duty, give to the whole the appearance *of a concern entirely private*, we need not be surprised, that the poor join the farmers in their clamours against tithes. ——I will take some other opportunity of endeavouring to point out some of the principal evils which result from considering livings as private property; and, I think I shall be able to show, that, in differing very widely from Sir William Scott as to the *indulgences* which ought to be granted to the beneficed clergy, I am not, according to my capacity, less than he a friend of the church. I must here observe, however, that it is not to his speech, as a whole, that I object. It is a most valuable performance, and should be read and well considered by every one whose attention is turned to public affairs; for, however slightingly some persons may think of the church establishment altogether, I am persuaded, that, as the state grew up with the church, so it will fall with it, whenever it falls.

Consolidated Fund.—When a mountebank has once got fast hold of the ears of the rabble, it must be his own fault if he lets go of them; and so, if one may be permitted to use the comparison, it must be of an English minister of finance, when he has once embarked the people, or, rather, their fortunes, in his system.——I am aware how little effect is produced by exposures of the errors or deceptions of the minister, upon subjects of finance; but, it is, nevertheless, right to persevere; it is right, now-and-then to revive such subjects, so that, when the explosion and its confusions come, the public may have it in mind, that there have been some few persons, who have not been deceived.——With a view not more sanguine than this it is that I now take up the pen to show, that "the first financier in the world," as his flatterers call him, will, according to present appearances, prove to have been more deceived in his last calculations than in almost any other that he ever made.—It will be remembered, that, in the Register of the 23d of February last, p. 289 to p. 309, in the course of some remarks upon the Budget, a view was taken of the decline in the *Surplus of the Consolidated Fund*. The source and application of that surplus were there described. It was shown, that the surplus arose from the permanent taxes; that it consisted of whatever was left of those taxes after defraying the annual charge on account of the national debt, the civil list and the pensions and salaries granted by parliament; and, of course, that this surplus was all, the war taxes excepted, that was left to maintain the army, the navy, the ordnance, and to defray the miscellaneous charges. I will here, for the sake of clearness, trouble the reader with a statement of the income and expenditure of the country; because, it is useless to read remarks upon a thing of which we have but a confused idea; and, from the manner in which the national accounts are kept and stated, no one who has not bestowed a considerable portion of his time upon the subject, can possibly have any other than a confused idea of what I am writing on.——The whole amount of the taxes, and occasional receipts, form, of course, the *income* of the nation, and would, were there no national debt, be all laid out in defraying the expenses of the year; in supporting the royal family; the officers of state; the judges and courts of justice; the officers attendant on the parliament; the army, the navy, and the ordnance; but, the national debt now swallows up *nearly the whole* of the income, leaving nothing worth speaking of to maintain the army and navy, to provide and secure the means of defending the country and maintaining its honour. The people have a vast idea of the expenses of the king and his family. When taxes are laid upon them, they think that it is a new sacrifice they are called upon to make to *royalty*; and this notion the loan-jobbers and other dealers in funds are very anxious to encourage, in order that the public eye may be kept from themselves. This race of men are, too, always the first to cry out against war, the moment it affects their speculations; and, they have frequently succeeded in persuading the people, that it is the current war, and that almost alone, which draws away their money in taxes. How false these opinions are will be perceived by a very simple statement of the distribution of the national income for the year 1803, the accounts of 1804 not

having been (for reasons that one may easily guess at) yet printed.

TOTAL INCOME of the nation.....		£31,869,961
EXPENDITURE—1. The king's household including pensions granted by the crown.....	£898,000	
2. Parliamentary Pensions, Salaries, and Allowances.....	398,007	
3. Courts of Justice.....	40,038	
4. Charge for this one year, for interest and management, *paid to the loan-jobbers* and *money-dealers*, on account of the national debt.....	25,364,488	26,700,533
Remainder		£5,162,428

Now, let the reader look at the figures, and he will see clearly who it is that swallows up his taxes. Not the king, not the parliament, not the judges, not the princes, not the pensioners, who, all put together, do not take much more than a *twentieth part* so much as is given to the owners of the national debt; to that endless swarm of contractors and jobbers, who crowd the metropolis, and to keep whom in idleness the country is drained to its extremities; its blood is sucked away even from the ends of its fingers and its toes!——But, to return now to the *Consolidated Fund* and its *Surplus*; the reader must observe, and bear in mind, that, because the interest upon the national debt is paid out of the taxes, the annual aggregate amount of the taxes, as above stated, for instance, is called, *a fund*, and the epithet *consolidated* is prefixed to it for a reason much about as good as that for which the substantive itself was adopted. However, so it is: the total annual amount of the taxes and occasional receipts, which, if cant were driven from the financial vocabulary, would be called, *the national income*, as I have called it above, is called the *Consolidated Fund*; and, the *Remainder* above stated, in the case of the year 1803, is called the *Surplus* of the Consolidated Fund. This surplus is, then, all that remains to provide for all the great purposes of national defence, of war, of negotiation, of colonial government, and of internal policy and improvement, all which, at present, cost more than forty millions a year! The deficiency must, of course, be made up in some other way; and, we see, and *feel*, that it is made up yearly, by taxes, called *war taxes* (as distinguished from the other, which are called *permanent* taxes), and by *loans*, borrowed of jews and other money-lenders; the principal of which loans forming an addition to the constantly increasing debt of the nation, and the interest upon them forming an addition to the constantly increasing load of our permanent taxes.——From this view of the matter, I think it is just possible for a man of plain sense to perceive what is meant by the surplus of the Consolidated Fund; and, in pursuit of my purpose, which is to show that the "first financier in the "word" has been quite out in his calculations respecting it, I proceed to state, that this surplus, has been, for several years, upon the decline, in direct contradiction to the calculations, the estimates, and the assurances of those "two first financiers in "the world," Mr. Addington and Mr. Pitt. In the autumn of 1802, it was estimated at 7,845,000l. In the summer of 1803, it was perceived to have been over estimated, and it dropped down to 6,500,000l. in a sort of dog-day's budget, opened before a dozen or two of wearied and drowsy spectators. Still, however, the anxious and faithful person who presided, or sat, over these matters, at that time, did, as we say, in cases somewhat similar, reckon the chickens before they were hatched; for the *yield* (to use a cant word of the Board of Agriculture) amounted, as we have seen above, only to 5,162,428. This grievous disappointment was a lesson of caution to Mr. Addington, who, just before he quitted the nest, as one may call it, and delivered over the eggs to his worthy successor, reckoned, as part of the resources for the year 1804, the sum of "*only* 5,000,000l." to come by way of surplus from the Consolidated Fund, which surplus, alas! amounted to just 2,200,000l. This unfortunate hatch was brought out under the wings of Mr. Pitt; and, here we arrive at the point, to which I have been endeavouring to conduct the reader in such a manner as to render the attention he shall bestow on it not altogether useless.——Mr. Pitt, in his budget speech, made on the 18th of February last, acknowledged, yes, he did frankly acknowledge, that an error in calculation had been committed by ..... Mr. Addington! Having, as it would seem, exhausted himself by this effort of candour, he was unable to explain very clearly the *causes* whence this famous surplus should be more productive in future. What, however, was deficient in fact and reason, he took special care to make up in assertion. He told the faithful and good-natured Commons, that the surplus of the Consolidated Fund for this present year would amount, at least to 4,000,000l. and at that sum he reckoned it in his estimate of the means to defray the expenses of the year. That he was wrong we cannot po-

sitively assert, till we see the *end* of the year; but, having now, by an excess in the indulgent disposition of that great personage Mr. Sturges and his worthy associate Mr. Huskisson, obtained a knowledge of the "yield" for the *first quarter*, we may, without being thought very presumptuous, venture to guess at what will be the "yield" for the whole year. The total amount of the permanent taxes from the 5th of January to the 5th of April,* is, 6,204,182*l.* The sums to be added to this, to make the income of the consolidated fund for the quarter, will be very trifling. The charge upon the fund for the quarter will be about 6,264,798*l.* It is impossible, as yet, to state with perfect accuracy what the charge upon the fund for the last quarter will be; but, there can be no very great mistake; and, I am inclined to think that I under-state it. If so, the charge *exceeds* the income; and, instead of a *surplus* of 4,000,000*l.* we shall find Mr. Pitt in a *deficit* of 242,464*l.* an awkward predicament for "the first financier in the world!" —— Though to time it must be left to decide; yet, we may even now take a fact or two to strengthen our opinion. We have not the account of the charge upon the consolidated fund for the several quarters of the year; but, we have an account of it for the quarters of 1803. The charge upon the quarter ending in April that year was 5,758,905*l.* The reader knows, that 40 millions of money have been borrowed since that time; and, of course, that more than half a million each quarter has been added to the charge on account of the debt; but, I shall, for a moment, suppose the charge not to have been augmented at all; and then, the surplus for the last quarter would be 445,277*l.* making, for the whole year, 1,781,108*l.* instead of 4,000,000*l.* This supposition is, however, merely for the sake of the statement; for, it is an undeniable fact, that the charge has been considerably augmented.——At the time when the grand financier was making his promise of a surplus of 4,000,000*l.* Mr. Fox expressed great doubts upon the subject. He said, he was afraid, that we could not hereafter have any new taxes upon consumption; that the sources of taxes appeared to be impaired; that there was ground for apprehending that our taxes upon consumption had reached the limit beyond which they could not be made more productive. That this opinion was well founded, the account for the last quarter tends strongly to prove. We know, that new taxes were imposed last year, yet the amount collected, either in permanent or war taxes, will not, according to all appearances, be *so great* as it was last year. The four quarters of last year yielded in permanent taxes 29,300,000*l.* the first quarter of this year has yielded only 6,200,000*l.* The four quarters of last year yielded in war taxes 11,400,000*l.* the first quarter in this year has yielded only 2,200,000*l.* The first quarter of the year is, indeed, generally the least productive, especially in the article of Customs; but, the difference is not so great as to warrant an expectation, that the three remaining quarters of this year will cover the defalcation, and will rise in that degree which is necessary to make the surplus amount to 4,000,000*l.*——In estimating the taxes we must, too, recollect that the depreciation of money is rapidly going on; and, that, though that circumstance may be viewed with a favourable eye, when considered merely as lightening the burden of a tax, we must not forget to take it into the calculation, when we are speaking of the amount of the taxes as an evidence of the capacity and consequent prosperity of the country.——The mill of the Bank of England goes merrily on; and the country banks seem heartily disposed, according to their several capacities, to follow so excellent an example. During the last 12 months, ending in February, the Bank of England notes had increased in amount from 17,000,000*l.* to 18,500,000*l.* and this is the rate at which the increase has been going on ever since the bank notes were made a legal tender. Men must be great fools indeed not to *make paper money*, if they can get people to take it for things of real value, and if they can, at the same time, appeal to the law for a sanction to their proceedings.—— Let it be remembered, too, that the *increasing of taxes*, in the present way, must, if there be no drawback from non-consumption, *create a source of taxes*. For instance, we raised 1,500*l.* in taxes last year, and Mr. Pitt obtained a grant of it from the King to the "*right trusty* and well-beloved council-"lor" Lord Melville, as a reward for long and *faithful* services performed by the said "trusty and well-beloved" lord, who, it is well known, had been Treasurer of the

* For what, if not for the purpose of *confusing*, are these days taken for the national accounts? Every man that wishes to keep *clear* accounts takes good care to make them up to regular periods. What, in the name of common sense, is there in the 5th of January more than in the 31st of December! Why not, like other mortals, make up the accounts to the end of the year?

Navy. But, no matter what the service: Mr. Pitt, who is a very strict and cute person, though he gives Lord Melville 1,500*l.* a year, takes care to clap on me an addition of *Income Tax* to the amount of 75*l.* And, who shall say, that, when Mr. Raikes was, (as the Sun newspaper tells us) reminding him of the malversations of Messrs. Dundas and Trotter, he was not of opinion, that they ought to be suffered to pursue their course uninterrupted, seeing that to interrupt them must, in all probability, considerably diminish the amount of the tax collected upon their income? *Connive*, indeed! The vulgar herd may call it conniving, or just what they please; but, I am greatly mistaken if the hint I have here thrown out, properly amplified, and tolerably well set off by a nasal twang accompanied by turning up the eyes and clapping the hand to the heart, would not be more than sufficient to obtain the unanimous suffrages of The Saints. ——I cannot take leave of this subject entirely without begging the reader seriously to ask himself, whether he thinks, that, with our present system of finance, we can *possibly* continue the present war for five years. Let him recollect, that we must make a loan of about 25 or 30 millions every year; that the national debt alone will cost us 40 millions a year before this day six years; and that our other expenses will cost us as much more at least. *Can*, then, this Pitt system continue? Is it *possible* that it can continue? What, then, will be the *consequence?* These are questions which every man, who thinks about public affairs, should put to himself, and should endeavour to solve.

The Enemy's Fleets.——In a preceding page of this sheet will be found the French official account of the proceedings of the French fleet in the West Indies. Dominica, Nevis, St. Christopher's, and Montserrat, were all invaded and laid under contribution by them, one after another; the magazines were destroyed; the troops in one case carried off prisoners of war; and all the shipping in the harbours taken or destroyed!——"Here's to the pilot that *weathered the storm!*" Where is this flatterer now? Where is he with his songs and his odes? Where are his birthday verses? Where his inscription for the statue? He is a man of sharp faculties; and, must he not, then, if he be not dead to all shame, must he not blush at the recollection of these marks of his servility to "the pilot?" Poor pilot! people blame him for not keeping a *look-out*, when I think it is pretty evident, that he is very wise to *look at home*.——Let them blame; let them tremble; let them for justice's sake, let them cry! Why, they were bellowing out for the pilot but a few months ago. Many of them who never thought of kneeling before their Maker, were crawling round the dirty rooms at the London Tavern to get at the hem of his garment. They toasted him as the greatest and *honestest* man in the world. I grudge them neither his greatness nor his honesty. I wish them to *feel* the effects of both. Did they not, with ostentation most scandalous, proclaim themselves indebted to him for existence, and dependent upon him for its continuance? Servility so loathsome was never before witnessed in the world. There was a perfect rivalship amongst them, who should become stewards, that is to say, a sort of *waiters*, at the festivals given in honour of him! And, this, too, observe, for the man who effaced the Lillies from the arms of England; for the man who made bank notes a legal tender; for the man who had approved of the peace with France, as a means of *husbanding our resources*, after having added three hundred millions to the national debt for the purpose of carrying on the war. Oh! that these slaves could but be set apart from the rest of the nation! If they could but suffer alone, what a consolation would it be to every loyal and public-spirited man! But, the castle must be defended, if possible, though we, at the same time, defend the rats. Whether we shall be able to defend the castle is another question, and a question, too, which if the system be not soon changed, will admit of much dispute. We stand, at this moment, waiting for a blow. We are not like men fighting with other men; but, like houseless travellers listening to the thunder, and every moment expecting the bolt to fall upon us. Who would have dared to foretell; who, only three months ago, would have dared to foretell the existence of such a state of things! "Every where" (says General Ernouf, the French commander at Guadaloupe, in his letter to Napoleon); "every where, "in these seas, is the flag of the English "humbled; all their men of war hide "themselves; their trade is annihilated, "and their merchantmen have sought security and protection in neutral ports, since "they did not conceive themselves safe be"hind fortifications, which surrendered as "soon as they were attacked." Doubtless this is an exaggerated description; but, we know, that it is but *too* true; and must we not be base indeed to feel no resentment against those who have been the cause of such disgrace! Let us remember, too, *where* this dispatch of Ernouf would find Napo-

leon. At *Milan*, or at *Rome*, quietly taking possession of the crown of his newly created kingdom. It is there that he will have received the account of the triumph of his forces; of their having insulted and plundered the colonies of England; of their having turned the laugh of the world against that country, whose minister, whose man of mighty words, menaced him with "chas-"tisement."——There also Napoleon will learn, that an English fleet and army, sailing forth after months and months of preparation, have taken *shelter in a neutral port* for fear of meeting with the combined fleets of France and Spain! There he will hear, with delight, that we are dispatching our regular troops abroad; that we are scattering them here and there in handsfull over the globe, while his preparations for invading us go steadily on.——It appears to me, that since the beginning of the war, our ministers have adopted no one measure that he must not naturally have wished them to adopt. The result, too, has, in almost every case, been just as he could have wished. The blind followers of Mr. Pitt and Lord Melville were told, that such would be the consequences; they were told, that the consequences would be exactly such as they have hitherto proved. What have we seen from them but fooleries, or something *more serious* than fooleries? The Volunteer Colonel with his cars; the High Admiral with his catamarans; the parish army; the "confi-"dential intercourse" with the powers of the Continent: what have we seen that does not tend to make good every thing we foretold respecting them. And will their adherents still turn a deaf ear to us? Will they still cling to them? The lamentable picture which the people of the West Indies give of their situation; their slaves armed; their plantations and sugar-works at a stand; their property perishing; their expenses augmented to a degree never before known; their towns in a state of siege; their houses in confusion; their families in a constant state of alarm: all this let them thank themselves for; let them thank the West India merchants and planters, who, for their own selfish purposes, have constantly supported, and are still supporting, even *now*, even under all the facts that have come to light; under all these circumstances they are supporting the Pitts and Dundases, the Cannings and the Addingtons, the Jenkinsons and the Castlereaghs.——They ask us, sometimes, if a change in the ministry would produce any good effect; and, if we do not think, that *all ministers are alike*. To questions like these there is no giving a serious answer. Was ever a doctrine like this inculcated before? For twenty long years we have had dinned in our ears assertions respecting the superior wisdom and purity of the Pitt ministry. But, *now*, all at once, we are told, that there is *no wisdom, no purity*, under the sun, at least as far as relates to ministers of state! This is unbearably impudent. But, it matters not; it is a sort of impudence which is sure to produce its own punishment. And, again I say, that the crying West Indians must excuse us, the people of England, if we remain heart-whole notwithstanding the calamities brought on them by the Pitts and Dundases and Cannings and Addingtons and Hawkesburies and Castlereaghs. One good turn deserves another. The West India merchants and planters have been, for twenty years past, giving their voices against us: we will do nothing *against* them; we will defend them if we can; but, if we cannot help smiling at the same time, it is hoped they will excuse us; and, at any rate, let their fate be what it will, they cannot expect us to go into mourning for them.——The melancholy reflexion is, however, that, in the long run, we must suffer as well as they. Nay, it is not certain, that they may not after all, regard themselves as *gainers* by what they are now so much alarmed at; though we, perhaps, mistake the cause of their alarm, it being *possible*, that it is a revolution in the *property* and not in the *government* of the West Indies that they are afraid of. If Jamaica be taken by the French, it appears almost certain, for the reasons stated in the preceding sheet, that it will not be recovered by, or restored to, England. But, planters stick to the soil if they can; and, as to merchants, they, like artists and men of letters, have "no country." Jamaica once possessed by the French, a free intercourse with America would be opened, and the European duties upon the West India produce would be very reasonable; and being, besides, carried in neutral vessels, would yield an enormous profit to the planter, and would, of course, enhance the value of all those mortgages, which the merchants have upon the plantations. Upon only taking this glance at the subject, does not the reader perceive the possibility of the West India merchants and planters changing their tone, a little while hence, and thinking Napoleon "a mighty good sort of a man!" This is the great danger. Only let Jamaica fall into the hands of Napoleon, let a free intercourse be opened with America, let other relaxations be adopted, and we shall soon see what stuff West India merchants and planters are

made of; we shall soon see to the bottom of the souls of those, who have supported the Pitts and Dundases.——The capture and *mild treatment* of Jamaica must, in all probability, totally annihilate, in a very little time, the British power and dominion in the West Indies. Such an event would, it is seriously to be feared, be a signal for general defection through the whole of the Western Archipelago. It would, eventually, destroy the better part of that navigation, which contributes most to our maritime strength; it would instantly diminish, in the amount of one eighth at least, the resources of the country; the effect upon private fortunes and upon public credit may be more easily conceived than described; and, as to the disgrace, as to the infamy wherewith it would cover us, who shall find words to give an adequate description?——The present state of things, however, I repeat it again and again, is no more than the *natural* consequence of the Pitt system of government; and, I have a claim to belief here, without entering into proof, having distinctly foretold that such a state of things would, and at this time too, be produced by that system. And yet, so fast is it rooted; so freehold-like is become the tenure of public office and emolument; so far forward is every thing pledged, and possessed in expectancy, that, till the 10th Report appeared, there was no reason to suppose that the system would ever be shaken by any thing short of some national calamity that would go nearly to annihilate the means upon which the system subsists; and, indeed, whether there be virtue enough in the country to render the facts of the Tenth Report efficacious to our relief, is a question that still remains to be decided.

Sir William Heathcote and Mr. Chute.——The conduct of these gentlemen, in respect to a *protest* drawn up, signed by them and others, and dated at Winchester on the 16th instant, being the day of holding the county meeting there, does, in my opinion, merit the severest reprobation. They are, though the fact may not be very generally known, two inhabitants of Hampshire, and the two Knights of that Shire, or, according to the more familiar phrase, the two members for the county. In this their capacity, they did, on the memorable 8th of April last, vote against Mr. Whitbread's motion for censuring Lord Melville. They, doubtless, acted according to the dictates of their conscience; or, at any rate, they were duly empowered to vote on which side they thought proper, and no one could, or can, without committing a breach of the privilege of parliament, and exposing himself to punishment, animadvert upon their conduct in that instance. Nay, I am of opinion, that no one ought to animadvert upon it, if it were lawful for him so to do. But, when these gentlemen choose to step beyond the bounds, not only of parliamentary privilege but of common decency; when they, the representatives of a county, range themselves in opposition to the loudly declared and almost unanimous sentiments of the people of that same county; when, at the same time, we see them signing and circulating a publication expressive of principles hostile to the ancient and undoubted rights of their constituents, and evidently tending to enfeeble, if not to stifle entirely, the voice of their prayer for redress of grievances; when we see them thus engaged, and that, too, in company with a list of persons holding places, and possessing emoluments from the public purse, during the pleasure of the minister; when they thus throw down the gauntlet, thus, in the public newspapers, proclaim themselves the adversaries of all those who have petitioned against the proceedings of Mr. Pitt and Lord Melville, to avoid a rencontre with them would be not only a mark of false delicacy but of political cowardice.——Whatever difference there may, in other respects, be between them and me, (and that there is a vast deal I should certainly be ashamed to deny) as writers in a newspaper, we are, in point of privilege at least, perfectly upon a level. In this character, therefore, I, at present, consider them, and, upon their conduct, in the same character, I intend to take an early opportunity of addressing some remarks to the freeholders of Hampshire, in which I shall endeavour to defend the conduct of those freeholders against the aspersions cast upon it by the publication, to which I have alluded, and of which I here insert a copy, together with the resolutions at the Winchester meeting. For the remarks which it will be proper to make I have not now room; but, the documents once fairly before my readers, the remarks will follow with a better chance of being clearly understood.—A meeting of the freeholders, in the county of Hants, was no sooner called, than the partisans of Mr. Pitt and Lord Melville appear to have begun to make preparations for nullifying the proceedings of that meeting; for, the same provincial papers that announced the meeting contained a notification in the following words, dated at Winchester, 11*th of May*, 1805. "The business on "which the county is called together on "Thursday next, is of so interesting a na- "ture, that it is hoped gentlemen from

" every part of it will not fail to attend on " that day, in this city. It is earnestly to " be wished also, that persons connected " with the county, who entertain *different " opinions on political matters* may be pre- " sent at that meeting, to throw all the " light on the subject they are capable of, " to enable the county, to form a judg- " ment, whether there is just ground for " believing *that a reluctance has any where " been shewn for discovering abuses, or any " disposition has been manifested towards " protecting delinquents when discover- " ed.*" *——The object of this notification is evident; and, for the present, I shall only observe with respect to it, that a similar notification having appeared in the READING paper, just at the time of the meeting of the county of Berks, inquiry was made of the printer, how he came to make such a publication, whereupon he stated, that the insertion of the notification was *paid for*, and came to him under the frank of *Mr. Freeling, the Secretary at the General Post Office.* Whether the Hampshire notification came from the same source, the reader must judge for himself.——The Resolutions passed at the Hampshire meeting, were moved by SIR THOMAS MILLER of Froyle, a truly independent and most respectable gentleman. There were nine in number, and were expressed as follows: " 1. That it appears by the Tenth Report " of the Commissioners of Naval Inquiry, " that money which had been issued for " naval services had been applied to other " purposes.——2. That such application of " naval money by Lord Viscount Melville " was a direct and wilful violation of the " law, and a flagrant abuse of public trust. " ——3. That the House of Commons, by " their votes on the 8th and 10th days of " April last, founded on the motions of " Samuel Whitbread, Esq. censuring and " reprobating such nefarious conduct, have " acquired to that honourable House the ve- " neration and gratitude of all ranks of the " people.——4. That the thanks of this " meeting, and of the whole country, is due " to all those persons whose patriotism sug- " gested, and whose zeal and ability have " carried into effect, the wise and salutary " measure of a parliamentary commission, " to inquire into the frauds and abuses which " have been brought to light by the Com- " missioners of Naval Inquiry.——5. That " it is the opinion of this meeting, that it " would be desirable not only to continue " and extend the powers of the Commis- " sioners of Naval Inquiry, but also to con- " stitute such other commission, upon a " similar principle, as may be competent to " investigate all irregularities, frauds, and " abuses, throughout the whole of the na- " tional expenditure.——6. That a petition " be drawn up and presented to the House " of Commons consonant to the preceding " resolutions.——7. That the thanks of " this meeting be given to the Earl of St. " Vincent, for having been so instrumental, " by his undaunted exertions, in bringing " forward to the public view the enormous " abuses in the naval department under his " cognizance and inspection.——8. That " the thanks of this meeting be given to " Samuel Whitbread, Esq. for the motions " made by him on the said 8th and 10th " days of April, and also for his upright, " able, and faithful discharge of his duty in " parliament.——9. That the zeal, fidelity, " and fortitude with which the Commis- " sioners of Naval Inquiry have performed " their duty to the public, not only merits " the warmest thanks of this meeting, but " those of every man in the kingdom who " wishes well to the prosperity of the peo- " ple."——The thanks of the meeting were given to Sir Thomas Miller for moving the resolutions, to the gentlemen who called the meeting, to the sheriff for his readiness in calling the meeting; and, it was resolved, that the petition (for which see the preceding sheet, p. 781) should be presented by Earl Temple, Mr. Clerke Jervoise and Mr. Shaw Lefevre, *taking no notice of the members for the county.*——At the meeting an opposition, particularly to the resolution of thanks to Lord St. Vincent, was made by LORD BOLTON and by a MR. POULTER, who was once a lawyer, but who, it seems, is now become a clergyman, and is settled at a place called Meonstoke, near Gosport. The language and behaviour of this latter person is said to have attracted particular notice; for, whether from the effect of the Dock-yard air whence he had just issued, or from the novelty of his situation, having been accustomed to hold forth without the hazard of contradiction, he discovered a degree of impatience, irritation, and insolence, which has seldom been equalled, but which did, nevertheless, excite very little resentment, the ludicrousness of it being still greater than the indecorum. With due submission, however, to the gentlemen of the church, it may not be improper to remind them, that, while their enemies represent them as having no right to interfere at all in political matters, their friends cannot fail to lament that they should ever interfere in be-

* Hampshire Telegraph, May 13, 1805.

half of such a man as Lord Melville must have appeared to Mr. Poulter on the 16th of this present month, he having been, ten days before, dismissed from the privy council; and, that the interference was, in effect, though not avowedly, *in his behalf*, Mr. Poulter cannot but allow, unless, in imitation of his lordship, he should choose to take shelter under the fifth clause.——The *Protest* was dated at Winchester, on the same day that the resolutions were, and it was published, as follows, in the Salisbury and Hampshire newspapers of the 20th instant: "In consequence of certain resolutions having been proposed at a county meeting holden here this day, and having (after the retirement of a numerous and respectable body of freeholders who in part objected to the same) been carried and ordered to be inserted in the newspapers:——We, the undersigned, protest against the expediency, or propriety, of the meeting called in this instance, on a business still depending before parliament; and we farther declare our particular disapprobation of the resolution conveying especial thanks to the Earl of St. Vincent, on the ground therein assigned."——[*Here followed the names; and then what follows here.*] "The above protest is published by the direction of those who signed it, and it is ordered to be circulated throughout the county, for the signatures of such persons as left Winchester before the conclusion of the business, and of all other principal freeholders who concur in the same opinion.——It is not the object of those who protest against the proceedings in this case, to check, but on the contrary to promote, the present constitutional zeal for inquiry into all public abuses; much less is it their intention to dispute the undoubted right of holding meetings of the people regularly convened, on such occasions. Their general objection to the late meeting is confined to the *time and circumstances* under which it was holden; namely, *when parliament have been and still are proceeding in the business in a manner so honourable to themselves and so satisfactory to the country*. Their particular objection to the resolution of especial thanks to the Earl of St. Vincent, is, because they do not think it advisable *exclusively* to compliment him as the sole author of a measure, *however salutary*, which had *the general concurrence of the other members of administration, and the sanction of parliament*; and because, however much they admire his lordship's professional merits, his subsequent official conduct being *under parliamentary inquiry*, any such interference with it would be highly improper."——The pretext of "*time* and "*circumstances*" is too shallow to deceive any body; and, when the two protestors, Sir William Heathcote and Mr. Chute, were signing their names, I should have been glad of an opportunity of asking them, *which* of the proceedings of parliament, in this affair, they regarded as "so *honourable* "to that body and so *satisfactory to the country*." The principal protestors were, the two members for the county, Ld. *Bolton*, Ld. *Rivers*, Ld. *Dartmouth*, Ld. *Malmesbury*, Ld. *Fitzharris*, Sir Henry *Mildmay*, John *Orde*, Dr. *Sturges*, and OLD GEORGE ROSE!!! Really one must, in candour, excuse them; but, when any one would, in future, illustrate an instance of *sincerity* pushed to excess, let him declare it to resemble the conduct of this knot of Pittites refusing to vote exclusive thanks to Earl St. Vincent, *lest* they should thereby *deprive the Addingtons* of their share in the "*salutary* "measure." Let us hope, too, that, the next time Mr. Canning gives us a dissertation on "Spartan virtue," he will not forget this solemn sanction given by *Dr Sturges* to a measure, which *his son opposed*, inch by inch, in every stage of its progress through the House of Commons. And, as to Dr. Sturges himself, if I were permitted to do myself the honour of throwing out a hint to him, it should be, that he would never again attempt to answer county resolutions, till he has *answered* the Letters of Mr. Milner; for, he must needs think, that, to all true churchmen, it is cruelly mortifying to behold one of our dignitaries, the Chancellor of a diocese, out-read and out-reasoned, defeated and prostrate, in a theological controversy with a Roman Catholic priest; and in a controversy, too, in which the honour of the Church of England has been exposed to hazard, and which controversy he himself wantonly provoked.

Proceedings against Lord Melville. ——On the 27th instant, the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, appointed to examine into the transactions brought to light in the Tenth Report of the Naval Commissioners, was brought up by Mr. Leycester, the chairman; whereupon Mr. Whitbread immediately gave notice, that he should, on Thursday, the 6th of June, make *a motion for impeaching Lord Melville*. In consequence of this notice, Lord Melville's son, the Keeper of the Signet (See the preceding sheet, p. 797), gave notice, on the 28th, that, when the motion of Mr. Whitbread should be made, he should move for his father's being admitted into the

House, agreeably to the usage of parliament in like cases, to speak in his own behalf; and, when the motion for an impeachment is made, Lord Melville will, of course, be admitted.——The Report is not yet printed (31st of May); and, it is impossible to describe its contents without seeing it. It is very improper, indeed, to attempt to give any description of it, either from hearsay, or even from a cursory reading of it; but, as a sketch of it has been published, in the ministerial papers, the COURIER of the 28th, and the MORNING POST of the 29th; and, as comments, evidently calculated to mislead the public, and to produce effects, if possible, hostile to the dictates of justice, to the welfare of the country, and, eventually, to the very existence of the state, it will not, I trust, be thought improper to point out a few of the most mischievous passages, and to offer a few remarks upon them.——With respect to Lord Melville, the following passages appear in the Morning Post of the 29th, as part of an abstract of the Report. "The committee "have found that 40,000l. from the naval "funds have been advanced by Lord Mel- "ville and Mr. Pitt to the house of Boyd "and Benfield. A sum of 10,000l. had "been advanced by Lord Melville before "Mr. Trotter became Paymaster of the Na- "vy; but how this sum was applied the "committee have been unable to ascertain. "Sums have been frequently advanced by "Trotter, for the use of Lord Melville from "a mixed fund, at Coutts's, of public and "private money. Mr. Trotter borrowed "at one time 22,000l. for the use of Lord "Melville, for which the noble lord was to "pay an interest of 5 per cent. Lord M. "did *not inquire how, or from what fund* "*the loan was obtained.* It was lent by "Trotter.——Trotter was in advance in ac- "count current to Lord Melville, *generally* "*from* 10 *to* 20,000l. which was lent from "a mixed fund, and for which Trotter con- "sidered Lord Melville his private debtor. "Upon these advances, however, *no interest* "*was ever paid*, nor was *any interest paid* "upon any of the sums of 40,000l. 10,000l. "or 22,000l. alluded to. Immediately af- "ter Mr. Trotter became Paymaster of the "Navy it is stated that he was appointed "private agent to Lord Melville. In this "capacity Trotter received the salary of "Lord Melville, with other sums in Eng- "land, and also remittances, sometimes "from Scotland, which receipts he paid "into the mixed fund at Coutts's. Trotter "had advanced sums to Mr. Tweedy and "other persons.—The advances he made to "Tweedy amounted, once or twice, to "about 3 or 4000l. All those sums have "been since replaced, *but without interest.* "The time at which they were advanced or "replaced cannot be said, ALL VOUCH- "ERS, &c. having been DESTROYED! "The Committee observe, that Lord Mel- "ville, in a letter to the Commissioners of "Naval Inquiry, states, that he did not de- "cline giving accommodation from the "funds in his hands, as Treasurer of the "Navy, to other departments of the public "service, they *do not find that any such ac-* "*commodation has been given in any in-* "*stance whatever.* The committee allude "to another letter from the noble lord to "the same commissioners, alleging that he "*did not derive any profit* from the use made "by Trotter of the public money, and *re-* "*fer to the Appendix*, which contains *the* "*evidence.*" I am not giving this as part of an abstract of an authentic report, but as a publication in a ministerial newspaper, professing to be part of such an abstract. THE UPSTART, who is well known to write in the Oracle newspaper, of the 29th instant, has observed upon this passage, that, if it be correct, he "does not hesitate to believe, that "Lord Melville is totally *free* of the charges "against him as a *participator* with Mr. "Trotter." This is exactly the course those writers pursued previous to the first parliamentary discussion upon the Tenth Report. They then told the public, that Lord Melville was *perfectly innocent;* that *no loss* had accrued; and that as to participation with Mr. Trotter, the charge was entirely groundless. The Commons, however, thought him guilty of a gross violation of the law and a high breach of duty. Connivance they fully convicted him of; the *participation* was all that remained to be proved, and, if the above extract be a fair representation of the report, that proof is now obtained. He borrowed the public money, and *paid no interest for it.* The principal was *paid back*, but it is not said that it was paid back *by Lord Melville*, or out of *his property.* All this, observe, if the above abstract be correct, *is proof;* and, the non-payment of interest is *proof positive of participation* with Mr. Trotter. Yet the UPSTART has the assurance to tell us, that, if this abstract be correct, Lord Melville is totally free from the charge of participation!——But, the blackest circumstance of all, is, that "all "the vouchers, &c. are DESTROYED," so that there is no finding out when, if at all, the *principal* of the sums borrowed, was paid back again; and, if this abstract should, at last, prove to be correct, there are few persons who will affect to believe, that it was *paid back at all.* I beg leave to refer, here, to what was said in the Register of the 20th

of April, p. 588, where, after having endeavoured to show the absurdity of believing, that there were *no accounts* kept, it was observed, that, "there *must* be an account "*somewhere*; and, this account ought to be "produced, not written with fresh ink nor "in the hand writing of the parties. If it "cannot be produced, the books of Coutt's "and Co. ought to be regarded as full evi- "dence of Lord Melville's having shared "with Mr. Trotter to the aggregate amount "of the sums placed against the name of "the former in the mixtie maxtie accounts "of the latter." This point has now been settled. The account has been demanded; and it has been proved, if the above abstract be authentic, that "all VOUCHERS, &c. "have been DESTROYED;" and that, too, as it would seem, *reciprocally*, and even in *concert!* Of persons detected in having so acted every thing is to be presumed. What! destroy *vouchers!* For what? A mutual destruction of vouchers; that is to say, of *evidences* of transactions between the parties! Was there ever such a thing heard of before, except in cases of conscious guilt, accompanied with its usual associates, a dread of the consequences of detection and a want of confidence in the accomplice?

MR. PITT'S CASE.——The Morning Post, of the date above-mentioned, and in the abstract before quoted, contains two passages upon the conduct of Mr. Pitt, which passages I shall extract, and then insert the remark made upon them by the ministerial newspaper, the SUN.——The passages relate, 1st, to money said to have been borrowed by Mr. Pitt, as Chancellor of the Exchequer and First Lord of the Treasury, from Lord Melville, as Treasurer of the Navy, and lent by Mr. Pitt to *Boyd and Benfield*, to enable them to make good an instalment upon *a loan which they had made to the government*; and, 2d, to information said to be given to Mr. Pitt, in the year 1797, of the mal practices of Messrs. Dundas and Trotter. "The loan of 40,000l. which the committee "remark was decidedly against the law, "was made under circumstances with res- "pect to the state of the country of a very "peculiar nature. Mr. Boyd represented, "on his application to ministers, that he "was under great pecuniary difficulties, and "*requested accommodation*. This accom- "modation was granted, *good security being "given;* and it being considered, as is "stated in the evidence, that if the accom- "modation were refused, the house of Boyd "and Benfield *might have failed also*. To "prevent such consequences, which, if they "should occur, it would, according to evi- "dence, be difficult to conclude a new loan "for the public service without a great loss, "Lord Melville, conceiving that the naval "service would suffer no inconvenience, "advanced the sum required. The security "given by Boyd and Benfield, consisted of "India Company's bonds and bills, and also "of some government securities. The sum "has been since repaid, *but without in- "terest*." Without interest! But, this is a circumstance of no more importance than any other of the circumstances: the whole transaction, if truly represented in this abstract, is as dark as it can possibly be. Lending loan-jobbers money; the peoples' money; money already raised in taxes; to enable those loan-jobbers to lend that same money to the people! This is quite new; perfectly original; nothing like it, nothing bearing the most distant resemblance to it ever before entered the mind of man. But, only think of the "*good security!*" It consisted of "India bonds, and also of some "government securities." Well, then, why could not Boyd and Benfield, with these same securities, have *got the money elsewhere?* That question I should like to have answered. Why could they not have borrowed the money of somebody other than Mr. Pitt? other than that same government whom they were going to lend it to? Was it that they could find nobody else generous enough to lend it them *without interest*? That would have been no very foolish reason; but, surely, there must have been another. Where is *the proof* that they gave any security at all? Where is the *record* of their having given "good security?" *When* and to *whom* did they pay back the money? It was returned to the Treasurer of the Navy; but *who took it from Boyd and Benfield?* Into whose hands did those worthy loan-jobbers pay it? Upon this head the abstract is silent; yet, these are questions that require to be answered. This transaction, if it be truly described in the newspapers, seems to me to strike at the very root of public credit. People have hitherto regarded a loan as a *bonâ fide* bargain. They have never imagined, that it was not binding upon the jobber; and, that, if it did not suit him to make good his payments, the people were to make them good for him.——If this abstract be correct, we can no longer have any faith in such transactions. There is no knowing to what a length these "accom- "modations" may be carried: nay, there is no knowing to what a length they *have been* carried; for what is now come out is come out by mere accident. And yet the writers in the SUN newspaper excuse, and even justify the conduct of Mr. Pitt, upon the supposition that it is truly described in

the above-quoted abstract. "We," say they, in their paper of the 28th, "understand that Mr. Whitbread's motion against "Mr. Pitt is to be grounded upon the fact "of a sum of forty thousand pounds having "been advanced to Messrs. Boyd and Benfield, a measure which, from every thing "we have heard of the circumstance, was "*completely justified* by the pressure of the "case, and the omission of which might "have been attended with consequences "highly detrimental to the public interest." ——There is *no crime* which these writers would not justify. It is an infamy to the country, that such sentiments should be endured by the public.——The passage relating to Mr. Raikes's information to Mr. Pitt is as follows: "The committee state, that "they do not find any representation on "this subject was made to the Lords of the "Treasury, but that it was represented to "Mr. Pitt, as appears from the evidence of "Mr. Raikes, and the admission of Mr. Pitt "himself. The Report states, that some "time in the year 1797, Mr. Raikes, Governor of the Bank, had an official interview with Mr. Pitt. After official business was at an end, he told Mr. Pitt, in "conversation, the manner in which the "public money was drawn from the Bank "by the Treasurer of the Navy; that he "had heard the treasurer (Lord Melville) "kept cash at Coutts's, and that navy bills "were paid by drafts on that house, instead "of by drafts on the Bank. Mr. Pitt "thanked Mr. Raikes for his information. "Such Mr. Raikes, in his evidence, states "to have been the purport of the conversation, but, from the length of time that "has since elapsed, he is not sure as to the "terms.——Mr. Pitt admits the general "import of the conversation as stated by "Mr. Raikes, but differs with him as to "the terms. He *don't undertake to recollect "with accuracy*, but states it in substance "to have conveyed to him *an impression* "that sums were drawn from the Bank and "carried to a private banking-house, to a "larger amount than was supposed necessary; that he took an early opportunity "of stating to Lord Melville the information he received from Mr. Raikes; and "though he *cannot state precisely* what "further passed between himself and Lord "Melville on the subject, he was *impressed "with a belief* that no sums were to be transferred but such as were necessary to carry on "the details of service in payments to individuals, and that it would be difficult to carry "on such details in any other way; that in "his conversation with Lord Melville he "*did not advert to the provisions of the act "which forbid such transfers, nor did it occur to him that drawing from the Bank "such sums of money in such a way for the "purpose of carrying on the details of office, was an illegal practice.*——Relying "on the *rectitude* of Lord Melville, from "*the opinion he entertained of him*, he "made no inquiry as to the *necessity of the "practice*, and was so far satisfied with the "general statement given by that noble "lord, that he *did not think it necessary to "communicate the circumstances of the case "to any other of his Majesty's ministers*, or "to take any further steps on the subject. "He had no knowledge or information of "any naval money, the 40,000l. excepted, "being applied to other services, except "from the communication of Mr. Raikes, "until after his retirement from office *he "was acquainted of it by Lord Harrowby*. "That noble lord told him that he *thought the "practice very singular*, and was therefore "*taking steps* to put a stop to it."——Now, supposing this abstract correct, how will the reader account for Mr. Pitt's conduct? And where is the man, who has any regard for his character, that will dare to offer an excuse for it? There is no room for comment here; but, I cannot conclude, without asking, whether it was *possible* for Mr. Pitt to think lightly of the information of Mr. Raikes, and whether it was *possible* for him to have forgotten the act of parliament, the *end* and *object* of the act of parliament, which had been violated? But, let us only take a few dates. In 1797 Mr. Pitt was first informed of the practices of Messrs. Dundas and Trotter; in 1800 he was more fully informed of them by Lord Harrowby; in 1804 he, nevertheless, places Lord Melville in the second office of the state, and in one having the command of that in which he had, to Mr. Pitt's knowledge, before violated the law; he, at the same time, sees Mr. Trotter restored; and he advises the king to bestow upon Lord Melville a grant of 1,500l. a year for life, in addition to his already enormous income from the public purse!——[This subject will, of course, be revived, when we shall have the report and evidence before us. What I have here said, is merely upon a *supposition* that the abstract so often quoted is correct, and for the purpose of protesting against the scandalous sentiments promulgated in the ministerial papers.]

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